

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

WORKING GROUP INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL MONTANANS APPOINTED BY MADAM CHAIR EVE FRANKLIN, JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By **MADAM CHAIR CAROL WILLIAMS**, on January 31,
2005 at 12:01 P.M., in Room 102 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Verdell Jackson (R)
Rep. Carol C. Juneau (D)
Sen. Carol Williams (D)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Mike Burke, OBPP
Jim Standaert, Legislative Branch
Diana Williams, Committee Secretary
transcribed by Kyanne Kelly

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed. Tape counter notations refer to material immediately preceding.

Working Group Summary

Meeting #4: Board of Public Education
Office of Public Instruction
MEA/MFT

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION Comments:

Steve Meloy, Board of Public Education, stated that the Board of Education has supported Indian Education for All by staffing hearings and setting up committees to study the issue. He said the Board of Education made a rule that the school districts adopt a policy on Indian Education. He stated there are not good resources available so the Board of Education can't require the school districts to teach Indian Education for all, but the Board hopes that by encouraging people to do it then they will. He said the Board of Education has the authority to bring the districts in line on this issue, but hasn't decided how to do it. He thinks the local school district, the Office of Public Instruction and the Board of Public Education need to get together to figure it out.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh24e01\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh24e02\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh24e03\)](#)

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0.3 - 15.7}

REP. CAROL JUNEAU, said there are 226 schools without Indian Education policies in place even though the Board of Education accreditation standards have been in place for three or four years.

Mr. Meloy replied that it is time to bring these districts to the table to tell them their accreditation is in jeopardy.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU asked what should be done with schools that don't comply.

Mr. Meloy said the Board of Education needs to work with the Office of Public Instruction to work with those schools.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU asked Linda McCulloch if the schools that are without Indian Education Policies would be reported to the Board of Public Education as deficient in accreditation standards. She stated that the leadership of the school system needs to take action.

Superintendent of Public Instruction McCulloch said there is not enough money to meet the requirements and there are no good resources. Money and resources need to be available before the schools are required to fulfill this obligation.

REP. VERDELL JACKSON agreed with Superintendent McCulloch. He thinks schools should not be forced to put Indian Education policies in place, they should do it willingly. He said all schools should be willing to teach Indian history, some schools

should teach heritage, and there should be an understanding of Indian values. He suggested it would be best to continue to work on the development stage, and later work on the implementation stage by finding someone willing to teach it. He thinks it can be done in four to five years, but doing it in one year is unrealistic.

SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS asked Eric Feaver to explain how to better communicate with teachers the current requirements for Indian Education For All.

Eric Feaver, MEA-MFT, said MEA-MFT could utilize the communication vehicles that are already in place for their 17,000 members. He said there is a teacher preparation program going on right now, but it will take a long time to develop Indian Education curriculum.

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 1.5 - 2.1}

REP. CAROL JUNEAU said there is a problem with understanding what Indian Education for All means. **REP. JUNEAU** said it means education for ALL Montanans. She asked Erik Feaver what role MEA-MFT role would take in teaching all Montanans

Eric Feaver said there is a need to recruit Indian teachers into the school system. He said the testing and federal requirements make it hard for Indian people to become teachers.

Steve Meloy said the Board of Public Education is evaluating the standards for becoming teachers. He said the greatest need is high quality materials for Native American education.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU said the constitution of Montana is supposed to drive us. She stated Indian Education For All is the only constitutionally-mandated curriculum in the state of Montana and the constitution supercedes 20-2-115.

Steve Meloy said the standard for Indian Education for All is requiring the legislature to be a cash machine.

Superintendent Linda McCulloch said that information needs to be supplied to the schools before the Board of Education starts cracking the whip on them. She stated the schools need to know what is expected of them, and be given resources, before getting tough on them.

REP. VERDELL JACKSON handed out an Indian Education curriculum developed in Alaska.

EXHIBIT (jeh24e04)

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 12:55 P.M.

SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS, Chairman

DIANA WILLIAMS, Secretary
KYANNE KELLY, TRANSCRIBER

EF/dw

Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([jeh24ead0.PDF](#))